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THRESCORE - AND - TEN.

WHEN I was a boy I used to think threescore-and-ten years a very sufficient spell of this world. I wondered how anybody could grumble at so liberal an allowance of life; and indeed, for my own share, I would no more have hesitated to give up my claim to the odd ten years than the gold-sellers do at the Diggings to throw the odd ounces into the bargain. That, I say, was in my boyhood, when I was too far off from what I was dealing so generously with to be able to understand anything about it. I know better now. Threescore-and-ten might have suited the Israelites very well when they were wandering in the wilderness; but I am decidedly of opinion that Moses when stating the limit, in his prayer printed in the Book of Psalms, made no allusion to us. In fact, the period in itself is objectionable, inasmuch as it is not a period at all, but more like a semicolon. It is not even an even number—which is odd; resembling more a half-way house than a final resting-place. It makes me uncomfortable to hear people talking of threescore-and-ten, as if they thought it improper to fly in the face of Moses. Let us see if there is not some mistake in it.

The mean term of human life varies not only in different countries, and different localities of the same country, but in different stages of civilisation. In modern England, the easy classes have an expectation of longer life than those of ancient Rome had, by no less than twenty years; yet in the census of Vespasian for the year 76, which included only that portion of Italy between the Apennines and the Po, there are three individuals mentioned who had attained the age of 140. In England, we know, Parr died from plethora at the age of 152; and if the accident could have been avoided—for it is a mere accident—there appears to be no reason why the jolly old gentleman (who married at 120) should have ceased to live even then, since Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, who dissected his body, could find no decay in any of the organs. Parr himself was but a juvenile compared with Henry Jenkins, who died in Yorkshire, in the year 1670, at the age of 169. From 100 up to this extreme age, there are numerous instances in various countries; and, in fact, one might almost suppose that nature was striving, with more or less success, to attain some fixed but unknown point. The reader, however, will please not to run away with this as a fact. I merely throw it out as a hint for the benefit of any distressed theorist out of employment. It will be at least as good as the question of the perfectibility of man, which disturbed the philosophy of the last century, but which appears unluckily to have been washed out of discussion by the ocean of blood and tears shed

in the wars that followed the French Revolution down to the late massacre of Paris.

On the subject of longevity, all that is known with absolute certainty is, that as man becomes civilised and refined, he lives longer, and that the term of 169 years is the longest he has yet been fully proved to have reached, except in the early Bible ages. When civilisation and refinement are widely spread in a country, they have the effect not merely of lengthening the term of life in individual cases, but of raising the average. Threescore-and-ten, I maintain, is no longer the allotted span which men surpass only in a few exceptional instances; and I would bet a trifle that our present allotted span, whatever it may be, will be still further extended before the lapse of another century. That it will eventually rise to 169 I do not assert, for I am naturally modest, not to say timid; but after ascertaining that the machinery of man's body is capable of lasting so long, I will thank any gentleman to hold up his face and tell me it is impossible. We are not to suppose that Mr Jenkins was created by miracle. He was an ordinary man, exposed to the influence of ordinary, not preternatural circumstances; and we know from experience in other things, that the circumstances which are mere coincidences in an exceptional case may become in the progress of knowledge the common usage. But why stop here? Why should Jenkins give us pause? A fico for Jenkins—the fig of Spain! He was but an intermediate passenger after all. He has proved merely that human life is capable of being prolonged to a period of some eight-score and a half of years, but has left us in absolute ignorance as to how far *beyond* that term it may go. This is one of the great secrets of nature, which at present we are not in a condition even to guess at; but, as I would avoid extravagance above all things, I shall frankly concede, that every analogy leads us to the conclusion, that there is a point beyond which the organisation of this corruptible body cannot last.

The span of human life is shortened sometimes by the disorders of nature, but mainly by our own ignorance and thoughtlessness. We are cut off, though not suddenly, yet prematurely, by disease, inappropriate labour, improper, or insufficient, or immoderate food, and a thousand other irregularities, which would have no existence after a few generations of general enlightenment. That improvement has taken, and is taking place, cannot be denied; but the slowness of its advance is one of the most wonderful things in human history. It is true, the pestilences of the middle ages are but faintly reproduced in our day: the cholera, for instance, is a mere pygmy compared with its predecessor, which, so late as the middle of the fourteenth century, swept

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off about one-fourth part of the population of Europe. But the circumstances that led to the success of that great invasion of the house of life, although no longer existing in one class of society, are as rife as ever among the other classes. In the towns of the middle ages, the houses were huddled together as they are only in the lowest quarters of those of the present day. With overarching roofs almost meeting in the middle of the street, without air, without ventilation, dark, filthy, and abominable, they were fitting stages for the pranks of the devils that break loose from time to time upon mankind. In the towns of this enlightened age, on the other hand, the stage for the dance of death is narrower. The easy classes have separated from the mass, not to avoid destruction, but to enjoy comfort and dignity; they have spread themselves, in broad streets and open squares, over what was formerly the country; and they think themselves safe—and are so, comparatively—since they are only in the neighbourhood, not in the middle of the hotbeds of infection. These hotbeds remain the same till the approach of the Pestilence; and then come magisterial admonitions, and whitewashings and scrubbings and airings, and the cry of death in the midst; and then subscriptions, and impromptu hospitals, and devotion in various forms, seeking to avert a penalty which we all know will be imposed where crime or error has been committed; and finally, speeches from the throne, acknowledging the fact as a divine judgment, which it is in a sense, but saying not one word of the sanitary measures and purer life, which are the true means appointed by divine wisdom for the prevention of such judgments in future.

That this is the ordinary course, cannot be denied; but even while the general misapprehension prevails, symptoms of amendment are here and there visible. The lodging-house abomination is placed under the surveillance of the police; cheap and wholesome dwellings for the working-class are springing up as experiments, and will soon be multiplied as speculations; baths and washing-establishments lend their indispensable aid to the cause of civilisation; and refreshment and reading rooms, parks, exhibitions, lectures, and glass-palaces, spread forth their attractions to snatch, even as brands from the burning, innumerable victims from the dens of drunkenness and infamy. Last, not least, a great legislative triumph has been achieved, which renders the necessities of life accessible to all who are able and willing to fulfil the conditions of the law of Work under which they have come into the world. Without this, there could be no advance, no hope; for, ignore the fact as we may, neither cleanliness nor ventilation will be of any avail against pestilence in a house where there is not wholesome and abundant food.

The symptoms of amendment, however, obvious as they are, although they may increase the number of those persons who reach the present mean duration of life, will but slowly affect the extension of the allotted span. Each individual has a great deal in his power, but not everything. Even setting aside the unthinking period of his youth, there is an anterior period in which he has no free-will at all; and a still earlier period—before he has come into this breathing world—when his constitution is in some measure devised to him prospectively by his ancestors. Taking this into account, the first generally enlightened generation would be composed of so many Cornaros, spending one portion of their lives in eradicating the diseases they inherited from others or contracted in their early years, and dying in their youth at 104. Cornaro enjoyed life to the last, and when his constitution would hold

no longer, he died by the hands of his parent and nurse, of injuries received before and after he was born. The next generally enlightened generation would have a better chance. They would have fewer inherited diseases, and would suffer less from ill-treatment in infancy: they might perhaps be the Old Parris of their day. But the Jenkinses would surely follow in the next generation; and after them, —who knows?—the *æ plus ultra* gentlemen who would out-Jenkins Jenkins, and get at last to the veritable allotted span!

That man, like nature herself, has an inclination towards a certain methodism in his goings out and comings in cannot be doubted, since he is one of the children of nature; but the tendency is frequently shewn in so irrational a manner, as to neutralise its advantage. He takes his meals at a regular hour—that is his instinct; but he appoints that hour, not according to the dictates of nature, but fashion. He goes to bed once in twenty-four hours, but the time depends upon circumstances, although these, generally speaking, are completely under his own control. He eats and drinks not only to satisfy hunger and thirst, but gluttony and an inclination for unwholesome stimulants. When this mode of living meets its due reward, and he becomes unwell, all these irregularities are amended under the directions of the physician. He is reduced to order; he falls into the general not pedantic methodism of nature; and he gets—well? Not exactly. He gets well enough to begin his course anew, as if nothing had happened; but the mischief is done—he has cribbed a certain space from his allotted span. There is nothing more absurd and meaningless than that expression—getting well. We never get well. Every bygone disease has, in the common phrase, driven a nail in our coffin. Some of the Eastern nations believe that even the deprivation of a few hours' sleep in the night has, each time it occurs, a grave effect on the constitution. To suppose that the duration of so exquisite and complicated a machine as the human body is not influenced by an accident, because that accident is to appearance repaired, is contrary to reason. The very act of repairing is an added injury; every dose of medicine contains some drops of poison, which, even if the disease is cured, subject the patient to a longer or shorter period of convalescence. Cornaro 'got well,' and it was well for him he did. Instead of dying at 50, he lived to 104; but if he had never been ill at all, instead of dying at 104, he would have lived—why not?—to 169. Balance, 65 years.

Invalids usually live long. They are not strong, they are debauched from some pleasures, and their spirits are below concert-pitch. But they continue to jog on, not uncomfortably, when the young, the happy, and the ardent are cut down around them. The reason is, that they have returned to the law of natural methodism, which they dare not break. They pass their lives in a constant state of practical repentance, either for their own sins or the sins of their fathers; and, after a protracted respite, they drop at last, comparatively, though not absolutely old.

The Quakers are a more than usually regular, yet busy and kindly group of the population; and instead of dying of stupidity at 50, as Jeffrey was told at Liverpool, their lives are insured in their own Provident Institution at a lower rate of premium than other people's. I have before me, taken from *The Friend*, a table of mortality of the Society from May 1851 to April 1852, both inclusive, which shews that out of 259 deaths, 97 occurred between three-score-and-ten and 94 inclusive; and that of those 97 deaths, 47 took place at the age of 80 and upwards! The fact is, we are getting on. I don't feel so modest now by half; and I am not sure that I have so prodigious a reverence for Jenkins after all. If the Quakers get

along at this rate, what is to hinder the rest of us of the (free and) easy classes to follow? The thing is done by good living, good working, and good sleeping, all at regular, natural times. Regularity has a great deal to say in it; and men, even with the narrowest brims in the world, have a decided tendency to regularity, if they would only give it fair play. If we cast our eye over our whole span of years, we shall find it a mass of mathematical lines, some strong, some faint, some properly, some improperly placed. We divide time itself by centuries, cycles, lustres, years, quarters, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, seconds; and these are dotted with anniversaries, festivals, and observances innumerable. The most ordinary operations of our existence have the same law; and in common life, each day is pretty much a copy of the preceding.

On this very day—for I write on New-Year's Day—a considerable portion of the world is beginning another term of life, and celebrating the occasion, as if some real and tangible gate had opened to admit mankind upon a new career. All civilised nations join in regarding the day as something peculiar and significant; and most people feel a certain exhilaration of the spirits as they look from their seeming vantage-ground along the vista of the future. The Chinese, who form a family group of about a third part of mankind, shut up till recently from the rest of the world, have many customs of the season similar to those of Europe, and many that Europe would do well to copy. They sit up to see the New Year come in, and hail its advent with shouts of joy; they betake themselves to the temple—even they who have never crossed the holy threshold since the last anniversary; they dress themselves in their best, and go about visiting and felicitating their friends; and they—pay their debts. This is *de rigueur* in China. With or without money, it must be done. The obligations of the old year must be wiped away, and a new score begun. Creditors would have nothing to do but to sit at home and receive their dues; only, that creditors have debts of their own to provide for like other people. Thus many contrepets occur. People are not at home when they are wanted; and unluckily they are at home when they don't want to lend. All China is flying through the town, under full sail, with its tail streaming behind, selling, pawning, borrowing, and paying; and perhaps the importunate debtor Wang-hi can meet his slippery creditor Wow-chi nowhere, till they run aboard of each other on the street.

But this is only the exoteric part of methodism. There are more burdens than debt which we ought to get rid of at every new term in our career, and which would cost us as little trouble, if we only got into the habit. If it was our custom at such times to forgive and be forgiven, to bind up broken amities, to renew the kindly feelings that have been withered in the glare of fortune, or chilled almost to death in the frost of adversity—is it unreasonable to think that the change would operate beneficially upon our New-Year, and that it would even extend the series of New-Years to—no matter: I have done with Jenkins. The instincts of nature are always good, if we would only use them well; and there is not one of the petty spans into which they divide our lives which might not be made a temple. The life of man is different from that of the brutes. No material methodism will affect otherwise than indirectly his moral nature, which is a part of his existence. If, therefore, we would get beyond our threescore-and-ten, we must attend to the regulation, not only of the senses, but of the affections. Long life is a blessing, for even the longest includes but a very short span of old age. When a man becomes old in the common meaning of the word, he dies very soon: Old Parr was but a middle-aged individual when approaching 140. If the case were

otherwise, I for one would look upon the new term of life that is opening to-day as a misfortune; but as it is, with a hopeful heart, and an unclouded brow, I wish the reader a happy New-Year.

A NIGHT IN THE CLOUDS.

TOWARDS the close of a beautiful August evening, the various roads leading to the city of Mannheim were filled with groups of cheerful, merry people, returning from the different pleasure-gardens, which had replaced the old fortifications: these, in their turn, became deserted and silent—all but one, where the murmur of merry voices and musical accompaniments still resounded. This was the Cabane Gardens, justly celebrated in Mannheim for its balls champêtres, fireworks, and balloon ascents. The novelty of these last had lately attracted great crowds. The admirable discovery made by the Montgolfiers had only recently been turned to account as an amusement; but the speculation had proved so successful, that there was not a public garden in Germany without its balloons; and an aerial voyage had become almost as easy and little feared, as a promenade on the banks of the Rhine. It is true, these trips were short, and allowed few chances of danger. Strongly attached to the ground by ropes that could be lengthened or shortened at pleasure, the balloon rose at the will of the aéronauts, and in its boldest ascents seldom went beyond the tops of the trees.

The crowd had abandoned the retired walks, and collected in the large esplanade, devoted to the exhibition of fireworks. The shrubberies had been some time deserted, when a man, of some forty years of age, accompanied by a young girl, appeared at the end of one of the most shady walks. They also directed their steps towards the esplanade; but proceeded slowly, and with the air of persons buried in thought.

After walking some way in silence, the man exclaimed energetically: 'No, sister, no! As long as I live, I can never forgive this Christian Loffmann, for disputing my right of succession to the property of his cousin! For, God knows, it was not bequeathed to me as a gift, but in payment of what the deceased owed me.'

'He ought to have said so in his will, Michael,' observed the girl.

'And am I to be deprived of my right because he did not do so, Florence? Because a dying man neglected to say all he should, is Michael Ritter to be accused of fraud by this Loffmann?'

'Alas! he does not know us, brother,' said the young girl gently. 'Others have excited his suspicions; and he believes them true, because it is his interest to do so.'

'And so,' replied Michael bitterly, 'I am to be deprived of the land I have cultivated these twenty years, and made mine own through the work of these hands, by a stranger, who has no right but that of the chance of birth—'

'But you know, brother,' interrupted Florence, 'judgment has not yet been pronounced.'

Her brother shook his head. 'Ah! I have very little hope. This Loffmann is young, active, and very likely has influential friends. Perhaps the decree which is to dispossess me has already passed.'

Florence sighed, and Ritter observed it. 'Come,' he said with an effort, 'here I am, at the same subject again, after bringing you here to refresh your thoughts, and help you to forget it. I wish there were some exciting spectacle—some new sensation, which could distract my mind from this one absorbing idea.'

As he said these words, a sudden turn in the path brought them out on a grassy square, which they had not before perceived: it was the part devoted to the ascent of balloons. A captive balloon floated gracefully over their heads; and suspended to it was an elegant

car, in the form of a boat, which seemed to glide gently over the greensward.

Florence involuntarily uttered a cry of surprise and admiration. Living at a distance from the city, this was the first time she had beheld a balloon so near, and she drew her brother closer.

'Room for two more!' cried the proprietor of the balloon and manager of the ropes.

Michael glanced at the car, in which a young man in a travelling-dress was seating himself, having in his hand one of these Alpine sticks shot with iron used in the ascent of mountains.

'Room for two!' he exclaimed; then turning to Florence, he said with a smile: 'Would you like to take a ride over the trees?'

'Are you sure there is no danger?'

'None, I can assure you, young lady,' said the manager; 'I have already directed the voyages of some ten thousand Christians.'

'And we can come down when we like?'

'Certainly. You have merely to pull the string of the bell you will find in the car.'

Florence hesitated; she was still rather afraid, yet the originality of such a ride tempted her. Accustomed in all things to act upon the advice of her brother, after a moment's indecision, she said she would do as he liked.

'Then I vote for a voyage in the air,' said Michael; and jumping into the car, he assisted Florence in.

As soon as they were seated, the manager slowly loosened the ropes, and the balloon began gently to ascend.

On feeling the motion of the car, the young girl uttered an involuntary cry, and turned pale. The stranger who was seated opposite her, placed his hand on the bell-pull. 'Shall we return to earth?' said he with a smile.

'Many thanks, sir,' returned Florence, who had regained her colour; 'I shall soon become accustomed to the motion.'

'Look—look!' interrupted Michael, 'we are already higher than the trees.'

Florence looked over the car, and the novelty of the sight dissipated her remaining fears. The whole of the Cabane garden lay spread below them, and looked like one of those models exhibited in the military museums. Immediately below the balloon lay the esplanade, crowded with people, the murmur of whose voices just reached the travellers. The air becoming lighter every minute, and laden with perfume, was exciting, and of a delicious freshness. Florence turned towards her brother, her face beaming with smiles.

'How grand and beautiful everything around us is!' she exclaimed. 'Tell me, Michael, do you not feel a pleasant kind of intoxication; and are you not happier here than you were just now?'

'Yes,' said Ritter: 'the physical sensations influence the mind; and it seems to me that I rise above the injuries of man as I do above his dwellings. But what is the matter? What does that crowd on the esplanade mean?'

'They are waiting for the fireworks,' said the stranger.

'Yes, and there go the first rockets!' exclaimed Florence.

'Why do they go off one after the other so?'

'O look! the woodwork which supported the principal works is falling to pieces.'

'The spectacle has failed!'

'Yes; and listen—do you hear those cries?'

'Gracious heavens!' exclaimed Michael. 'They are destroying the fences around the flower-beds.'

'It is a students' row,' said the stranger; 'they are revenging themselves upon the garden for the disappointment.'

'How glad I am that we are out of the way of all the tumult!' added Florence.

'Then you are not frightened now?' asked Ritter.

'Not in the least.'

'Then we will go still higher.'

He made the necessary signal; the balloon continued to rise higher for several minutes, and then became stationary.

The three travellers uttered at the same moment an exclamation of admiration. Below them lay on all sides, as far as the eye could reach, beautiful valleys, winding streams, forest, hill and plain, cultivated fields and villages, their positions and forms varying every minute. The Black Forest formed the Würtemberg frontier, while the Rhine on the French, surrounded the picture with a wavy line of silver; and beyond lay the serpentine Neckar, winding off into the distance, chequered with bright-glancing sals.

'Happy country!' said the stranger, as if to himself, 'where God gives to man the fertile field, the navigable river, and wooded mountain.'

Michael sighed. 'Happy, above all, could man be untroubled with lawsuits and libellous reports,' muttered he in a low voice.

The unknown turned towards him. 'Ah, no one knows that better than myself, sir!' said he.

'What! are you also condemned to defend your rights before the court?'

'Yes, and against an adversary who will leave nothing undone to ruin me.'

'It is my own case,' said Michael. 'If he gain this suit, he will deprive me of all I have spent my life in acquiring.'

'And for my part, all my future depends on it.'

'The work of my hands will help to enrich a grasping, avaricious man.'

'And,' pursued the stranger, 'all my future prospects will be annihilated to enrich a hypocrite.'

'I fear the law will not decide in favour of the cause which has the right on its side.'

'And I am afraid that intrigue will be stronger than justice.'

'Ah, I see,' cried Michael; 'our positions are the same: you also have a cause against some Christian Loffmann.'

'Christian Loffmann!' repeated the stranger; 'why, that is my own name.'

'Yours!'

'And my adversary's Michael Ritter.'

'Why, I am he!'

The two men regarded each other in astonishment, and with such a mixture of anger and hatred, that Florence became frightened. 'Let us descend, brother,' said she, laying her hand on her brother's arm; but he did not hear her.

'What Herr Loffmann says of his opponent is false!' he cried, fixing his sparkling eyes on the stranger.

'And what Herr Ritter says of *his* is a lie!' fiercely retorted the young man.

'In the name of Heaven, let us go down!' reiterated the girl.

'So be it,' said Michael: 'it will be easier to come to an explanation on solid ground.'

'And I hope it will be a decisive one,' added Loffmann, in a significant tone.

He had already rung the bell, and all three awaited the descent of the balloon in silence; but it remained motionless. The young man rang again a second time, and then a third, with no better success.

'The man must have heard,' he murmured, as he again pulled the string.

'He has disappeared!' exclaimed Florence, who had been looking over the car.

'So he has,' said Michael, looking in his turn: 'the émeute has alarmed him. See! they are making a bonfire of the benches.'

'And look at that party of young men parading the garden, breaking the lamps.'

'See! they are under the balloon. Good God!'

'What are they doing?'

'They are cutting the ropes!'

'What are you saying?—what do you mean?'

'Look for yourselves.'

All three hung over the car, and raised a fearful cry, waving their hands at the same time; but it was too late. Imagining that the car was unoccupied, the students had cut the ropes which secured the balloon; and the latter, rising with frightful rapidity, was soon lost in the mists of evening.

Our three travellers at first wearied themselves with loud shouts, in the hope of attracting attention; but when they lost sight of, first the garden, and then of the earth itself, a kind of calm, produced more by exhaustion than resignation, took the place of their first desperation. They remained motionless and silent. Their situation was indeed one of great danger. In general, the aéronaut is provided, as much as possible, against every probable accident by acquired knowledge and experience. Before entering upon his career, he attends lectures on the subject, gains all the information he can, and serves an apprenticeship to his profession; but here were three helpless beings suddenly cast loose from the earth, without rudder or compass, as it were, tossed about at the will of every passing breeze, with a horrible death before them, yet uncertain at what moment it might come.

Florence, half-fainting with terror, hid her face on her brother's shoulder, and he sat overpowered with fear, astonishment, and horror, knowing not what consolation to offer.

Christian Loffmann, seated at the other end of the car, seemed more calm, and from time to time threw a look of communeration on Michael Ritter and his sister; but the remembrance of their mutual enmity, and the reciprocal insults they had heaped on each other, still divided these two men, and held them apart, even in a common danger.

Meanwhile the balloon, abandoned to the winds, floated at hazard through the heavens, now cutting the air as rapidly as a swallow returning to its nest, anon hovering above the mountains, like a vulture over its prey. Now and then, when Ritter or Loffmann looked over the car, they beheld at the bottom of the gloomy gulf, the flickering and confused lights of towns and hamlets. But by degrees these last traces of earth disappeared, and the balloon sought still more elevated regions, the air becoming every moment more and more rarefied. The breathing of the travellers began to be oppressed; they experienced a violent singing in their ears, and sharp pangs shot through them, as the cold air benumbed their limbs. Florence, whose strength was quite exhausted, gradually sank down to the bottom of the car at her brother's feet.

'What are you doing?' he exclaimed.

'I feel so overpowered with sleep,' she murmured.

'Awake! awake!' cried the terrified Michael; 'to sleep is death! Rouse yourself, Florence!'

But she remained motionless.

'Florence!' repeated Michael in agony. 'O God! she does not hear me; and I have no means of warning her—'

'Take this cloak,' said a voice.

He raised his head, and perceived Loffmann by his side, in the act of unfastening a kind of furred pelisse he had till then been enveloped in. 'But what will you do yourself?' asked Ritter, surprised and touched.

'The strong should suffer for the weak,' said he, taking off his cloak.

Michael helped him to wrap his sister in it, and in so doing, their hands accidentally came in contact; Michael seized Loffmann's eagerly. 'What you have just done

redeems all the rest,' said he; 'and I recall the hasty words which wounded you.'

'You have nothing to recall; I was the most to blame,' said Loffmann, greatly moved.

'Let us forgive one another, then,' said Michael. 'We shall soon stand before God himself: let our hatred cease ere we appear before Him.'

'Mine is gone!' cried Christian. 'Michael Ritter, here is my hand; it is that of a friend!'

'And I accept it as such,' said Michael with emotion. 'We have both been deceived, Loffmann: each has believed the other a rogue, because our interests have been opposed; and have slandered each other, though personally unknown! Alas! how often it is thus with man. Let us thank God for uniting us in this awful hour, enabling us to appear before Him without bitterness of heart one towards another.'

'Let me also add my thanksgiving, Michael,' said Florence, who had revived.

'Let us pray, then,' said Ritter, folding her in his arms; 'and may God so forgive us, as we forgive others.' At these words, he uncovered his head, and Christian doing the same, they all three bent in prayer. When they rose, a streak of light had appeared in the east; the day was dawning.

The wind, which had carried them to such elevated regions, now gradually sank; and as the balloon gently descended, a ray of hope stole into their hearts. At first, though united in danger, they were separated by hatred; but now all three joined in mutual consolation and encouragement. The sun rose, and they were soon able to distinguish the variegated country. It seemed like a sudden resurrection: they were no longer wandering in the gloomy abyss through which they had passed the night; the sun shone, and earth still existed! There lay fields, rivers, mountains, cities; and there lived their fellow-men, who were, perhaps, at that very moment, following their course through the clouds with anxious eyes.

The balloon still continued to descend, and at last they were able to distinguish the fields, houses, and even persons. All at once Ritter uttered a cry of joy: he recognised Soërrach, and further on lay his own village! Florence clasped her hands with a deep sigh; she saw the roof of her dwelling, the oak-wood where she had so often sat and worked, and the little mountain rivulet. Michael himself wept. At this moment the balloon, which till then had continued to descend, again began to rise with a fresh breeze. The young girl and her brother uttered a cry of despair, and leaning over the car, extended their arms towards their home.

'My God! is there no means of descending?' cried Florence, the tears streaming down her cheeks.

'There is one,' answered Loffmann; 'but it is dangerous.'

'Oh, let us try it; anything rather than this agony,' said Ritter hurriedly: 'remember last night.'

'Yes,' said the young man; 'it is our only chance; now for it.' He rose cautiously, raised his Alpine stick, which had lain by his side, and with the iron point pierced the silk of the balloon. The latter emitted a sound like a deep sigh, and waved to and fro like a wounded animal. That moment of suspense seemed an hour. Then the gas rushed forth with impetuosity, and the silk of the balloon shrunk with frightful rapidity. The travellers closed their eyes, overcome with terror. Before long, a sharp explosion was heard, followed by a violent shock, which made them open their eyes, and they discovered that the netting had become entangled in the branches of a willow, and the car hung within a few feet of the ground.

Towards the end of the same day, Loffmann and Ritter were sitting in the window of a house on the

hill-side. It was Michael's dwelling, to which he had conducted his companion after their common deliverance. The brother and sister at first could find room in their hearts only for grateful joy at their wonderful preservation; but, presently, in Ritter awoke the remembrance of the coming danger to his interests.

Resting his elbows on the wooden balustrade which served as a balcony, he had remained for a long time silent, when Christian whose eyes had been wandering over the landscape, suddenly exclaimed: 'How far does your property extend, Herr Ritter?'

The latter shuddered as he saw on what his guest's thoughts were bent. 'Ah, you wish to see what will be yours if your suit be successful,' said he bitterly.

'Upon my honour, I was not thinking of that,' said Loffmann, disconcerted.

'You need not blush to own it,' said Ritter; 'every one believes in the justice of his own cause. I will shew you the boundaries of the estate; and he pointed out, one after the other, the woods, fields, and meadows which composed the property.

'It seems in excellent order,' observed Christian.

'Yes; I have devoted all my time and energy to it,' replied the farmer. 'I had planned many other improvements; but who knows how many days I have to remain here? the land, perhaps, has already ceased to be mine.'

As the words left his mouth, Florence entered—she seemed troubled, and held in her hand a letter bearing the Mannheim postmark.

'Is it from Herr Littoff?' said Michael, turning pale.

'It is,' she replied.

'Then judgment is pronounced, and we shall know our—' He held out a trembling hand for the letter, but Florence seized it between her own, and, glancing timidly at Loffmann, said: 'Ah, but remember, whatever happens, you have sworn friendship for each other—'

'The letter! give me the letter!' interrupted the agitated Michael.

Florence stepped back a pace. 'First promise, that you will submit to the decision, whatever it may be,' said she with energy; and pointing at the same time to the foot of the hill, and the willow on which still hung the remains of the balloon, she added: 'Have you already forgotten the night passed in the clouds?'

Ritter and Loffmann looked at each other, and, after an instant's hesitation, held out their hands.

'No!' exclaimed Michael; 'it shall not be said that danger alone inclines our hearts to mercy. Saved as we have been by the goodness of God, let us prove, by our submission, that we are grateful. Christian Loffmann, we threw away our enmity above—do not let it return on earth. Whatever that letter may contain, I declare that I will submit to the decision without anger.'

'And I will bless it for giving me such a friend, even though it ruin all my hopes,' added Christian.

Florence gave the letter to Michael, who took it with a firm hand, ran it over, and turned slightly pale.

Florence rushed forward.

'You are master here, Herr Loffmann!' said the farmer, turning to the young man.

'Then the cause is decided in my favour!' he exclaimed in a tone of joy.

'Yes; here is the sentence.' (Christian took the letter which Michael held out.) 'Henceforth this property is yours—'

'The estate is not equal to the happiness of possessing a friend,' interrupted Loffmann, tearing the paper.

Ritter stared at him in astonishment, and Florence clasped her hands.

'Yes,' replied the young man; 'I came here as a guest, and I do not choose to remain as an enemy. He who has so nobly received and hospitably entertained me, shall himself appoint one who will decide upon the justice of our several claims.'

'I!' said Ritter with emotion. 'Ah, whom could I appoint?'

'She who created our friendship can, if she chooses, still more firmly unite us, and render the division of the property an easy matter.'

'How?' inquired Michael.

'By making the two friends brothers!'

Ritter turned to Florence with a questioning though smiling glance, and the blushing girl timidly extending her hand to Loffmann, hid her face upon her brother's shoulder.

ZOOPHYTES.

WHEN Peyssonel, a French naturalist, in the early part of the eighteenth century, asserted that the beautiful plant-like forms of the zoophytes should be referred to the animal, rather than to the vegetable kingdom, his doctrine was received with incredulity and derision. The learned men of his age, deceived by the external configuration of those curious productions, refused to believe that they were not what they seemed to be. Their arborescent masses, firmly rooted to stones and shells, presenting the stem, the branches, and the general arrangement of the plant, and increasing by a process of budding, were unhesitatingly classed amongst the numerous family of *Alge*, or sea-weeds.

Even when the awkward discovery was made, that there were actually living polypes within the cells which covered the branches of the supposed plant, it was contended that these were merely accidental lodgers, and had no organic connection with the structure in which they had found convenient shelter. Some, more fanciful than their fellows, regarded them as blossoms, and saw in them an additional proof of the vegetable nature of the zoophyte! Poor Peyssonel, like many another pioneer of the truth, found no favour amongst the learned of his day; was 'put down' by men who had no practical acquaintance with nature, and voted a foolish theorist by the conservative aristocracy of science. Continued research has long since established the correctness of his views; and every student of natural history now knows, that the zoophyte is no more a vegetable than the elephant or the horse. By the unlearned, however, its plant-like aspect is still taken as a proof of its plant-like nature; and it is commonly to be found, neatly mounted, in the collection of the amateur, as a 'weed.'

The zoophytes constitute a singularly beautiful and interesting tribe of beings, and we doubt not that a short *résumé* of their history will prove acceptable to our readers. No rambler by the sea-side, who is in the habit of taking any note of the treasures which the ocean flings so profusely in his way, can well be ignorant of the forms of the commoner species. Masses of them, rooted to shells, or involved in the heaps of weed left by the receding tide, are to be met with on every sandy shore. They may be known at once by their horn-like appearance, and, on closer examination, by the cells which cover their delicate branches. But remember, that the masses, as you commonly find them on the coast, are but the skeletons of the zoophyte. To appreciate its full beauty, you must see it living; you must see it while yet bathed by the water which maintains its existence; when the seeming stem and branches and branchlets are instinct with animal vitality, and its thousand cells are all filled with active beings, which now expand their circles of milk-white arms, like fairy flowers, now sink with sudden haste into their little mansions. You must see it thus, to know how beautiful a thing it is.

The zoophyte is a compound being. It is not an animal with one set of arms, one mouth, and one stomach; it counts them by hundreds. The beautiful plant-like skeleton which you pick up on the shore, is, in fact, a horny, ramified, tubular case, which, in the

living state, is permeated throughout by animal matter, as the bone is pervaded by the marrow. The main stem is hollow; every branch and branchlet is hollow; and through them all—stem, branches, and minutest branchlet—runs the vital thread, which is the essential portion of the organism. Every here and there along the branches, the horny tube expands into a pretty little cell, of varying form in different species; and in each of these cells is lodged a polype; and every polype is attached to the animal thread that pervades the entire structure, is in organic union with it, shares its life, and helps to provide for its nutrition.

These polypes resemble in general structure the *Hydra* of the fresh waters—a famous creature, whose story has been told so often, that it were hardly needful to repeat it here; and hence this order of zoophytes—which is the simplest—has been called the *Hydroid*.

The polype may be described in few words. It is a minute gelatinous body, with an opening at the upper extremity, which serves as a mouth, around which are set a number of delicate, thread-like arms, and with an interior cavity, which discharges the functions of a digestive sac. Every cell on the plant-like zoophyte has a tenant of this kind, and the said tenant is attached to the percurrent-animal thread at the base of its cell. It can expand its tentacles, blossom-like, at pleasure, beyond the opening of its little dwelling, in quest of food, and at pleasure can fold them up, bud-like, within its shelter. Every polype on the compound organism enjoys a certain amount of individual liberty, but all are strictly subservient to the commonwealth of which they form a part. Each may cast out its fishing-lines, and capture its prey, and digest its dinner, at such seasons as it may see fit: the right of private judgment is so far respected! but of all the nutriment which it accumulates and prepares in its own laboratory, by far the largest portion is appropriated for the service of the commonwealth. There is a communication between the stomach of every polype and a channel which runs through the entire length of the medullary pulp, and a stream of granular fluid is constantly flowing up and down this channel, which enters the stomachs of all the polypes, mingle with the food which is there undergoing the process of digestion, and having taken up certain portions of it, bears off the nutrient matter, and distributes it throughout the whole structure.

The polypes, then, leading an independent life in their little cells, obtain food as they will, and digest it as they can; but the produce of their combined exertions goes to support the complex organism with which they are connected. The zoophyte is an animal of it may be, a hundred or a thousand stomach-power—ponder this, ye gourmands!—and has, not unfrequently, some 10,000 arms engaged in supplying it with food! Or it may be regarded as an assemblage of animals bound together so as to form one compound organism. It may be likened to a federal republic, in which many states are united so as to constitute one commonwealth, all being subject to a central power, and bound to furnish their quota for the support of the whole, but each having the control of its own peculiar affairs.

Very graceful and delicate are the plant-like forms of these curious beings; masses of them may often be met with ornamenting the rugged shell of some venerable oyster, composed of many specimens, all united by a common fibre, which creeps over the surface, and is also pervaded by the living pulp. It is quite appalling to think of the polype population which the poor mollusc must raise whenever he feels it necessary to gape! One or even two hundred thousand individuals may tenant cells on the tufts which decorate his upper valve, and these he must performe elevate before he can inhale his oxygen or appease his hunger! To the onlooker, it is pleasant to know that so much of happy existence is often crowded even on the rough outside of the oyster's home.

The polypes, which we have likened to blossoms, are almost as fragile and as easily destroyed. At times they wither away and are lost, and for awhile the cells remain tenantless; but the vitality of the connecting pulp continues unimpaired, and ere long a fresh crop will sprout from it, and every mansion will have its occupant again. As the tree sheds its leaves, the zoophyte will shed its polypes, but its spring follows close upon its autumn.

The curious animals of which we write, increase in two ways: like the tree, they put forth fresh branches, which expand into cells at the proper points; and within these, new polypes are gradually developed. In obedience to the law of the species, buds pullulate from various portions of the structure. You see an excrescence forming on the stem—it is an offshoot from the central pulp, full of strong vitality; it increases—it becomes a branch; the branch puts forth a cell, into which the pulp passes, and is there moulded into the polype form. It is interesting to watch the process of formation. Within the fleshy mass enclosed in the cell, a central cavity appears, into which the nutrient stream finds its way. The stomach is now hollowed out. Round the upper portion of the nascent body, a number of small knobs or tubercles shew themselves; they increase in length, and the beautiful circle of arms is complete. Meanwhile, within the ring of tentacles, the forepart of the body is prolonged into a kind of trunk, and perforated at its extremity. The polype has now a mouth, and commences life! In this way, new members are added to the commonwealth.

Thus it is that the individual specimen is enlarged, and by a similar process the colony is extended. The creeping fibre by which the zoophyte is attached to the surface from which it springs, can also put forth its buds, which evolve, in due time, perfect shoots, branched and polype-laden—all united together, sharing one life, and nourished by the same juices.

But there is another provision for the diffusion of the species; and few chapters in natural history are more attractive or more astounding than that which relates to the mode in which the zoophyte rears its family, and sends it forth into the world.

The tree puts forth branches and leaf-buds, and so increases its own dimensions; it also matures flower-buds, and prepares a new generation. The plant-like animal does much the same. It has its two classes of cells. The one set, in which the polypes are lodged, is always present—the other is produced at certain seasons only, just as the flowers are on the plant, and is devoted to a different office. These cells, which are called vesicles or capsules, differ in form from those which contain the polypes, are larger, and more sparingly distributed over the zoophyte. They are often prettily urn-shaped, and are sometimes decorated with spines and other sculpture. Truly did Hogarth write of these 'pretty little seed-cups or vases,' as he calls them, that 'they are a sweet confirmation of the pleasure nature seems to take in superadding an elegance of form to most of her works, wherever you find them.'

The vesicles, as we have said, do not contain polypes, but they do contain an offshoot from the central pulp; and in this, ova are matured. The urn-shaped cells are the repositories in which minute, spherical bodies, clothed with vibratile cilia, are elaborated, destined, like the winged seed of the plant, to diffuse the species far and wide. In due time, you may see a number of these little locomotive balls escaping through the mouth of the vesicle, and then dancing gaily through the surrounding water. Follow one of them through its vagrant course: after a short period of activity, you will find that it has got rid of its cilia, and settled down into a very unpromising circular speck; you might well suppose that its career was ended, but there are mystic powers in the germ yet, and its quiescence is but the prelude to its development.

Very shortly, a swelling will appear in the centre of this little disk, which will gradually rise higher and higher, until at length you will have before you a slender stem, such as we have described as belonging to the zoophyte; and from this stem, at the proper point, a cell will be developed; and in the cell a polype will germinate, and so the foundation of the compound, arborescent organism will be laid! Branch follows branch, as growth proceeds, according to the pattern which nature has prescribed for the species, until the structure is complete. In some cases, however, the germ issues from the vesicle under a different guise. Instead of the restless ciliated *ovum*, chartered to wander freely through the ocean, and to colonise distant settlements for its race, small leech-like bodies (*planulae*) are produced, which, on escaping, undergo a similar process of development, and reproduce the perfect animal.

The zoophyte, then, staid creature that it is—

Half-plant, half-animal,
Rooted, and slumbering through a dream of life—

as the poet sings, has a brood of errant-children; and the vagrancy of the young is the compensation, in the economy of nature, for the fixity of the adult.

The bell-corallines (*Campanulariaceae*) are amongst the most exquisite of their order; for delicacy and grace, they are perhaps equalled by none. They are generally minute, and may be found spreading over marine productions, adorning them with a profusion of ringed and twisted pedicels, surmounted by crystal cups, which are moulded into the loveliest shapes. These, too, have their urn-shaped vesicles in which the reproductive bodies are matured. But the latter are peculiar. In laden vesicles you may see a number of circular, disk-like bodies, with a dark centre, of various sizes, clustering about a median line. In time, the uppermost one of the set will begin to struggle towards the orifice, jerking itself onward in a style more vigorous than graceful. After some labour, it will succeed in freeing itself, and will drop from the vesicle into the surrounding water—what? Not certainly a ciliated egg, nor yet a leech-like *planula*. If unprepared for the birth, you may be pardoned for some passing suspicions as to the truthiness of your eyes; for the being which has just escaped from the vesicle of the bell-coralline is surely a miniature jelly-fish in appearance! There is the transparent hemispherical disk, with arms round the margin, and proboscis hanging from the centre; and there is the characteristic jerk by which the *Medusa* propels itself. You cannot doubt it; and may well be confounded at seeing a member, to all appearance, of another tribe—and that a tribe of ocean vagabonds, noted for nothing so much as for its locomotive powers and erratic propensities—issuing in the most natural manner imaginable, from the reproductive cell of the staid and stationary zoophyte.

The offspring of the bell-coralline, then, is unlike its parent; is allied in general structure and appearance to the members of a higher tribe than that to which its progenitor belongs; nor does it ever become like its parent. It does not pass through any series of transformations, and emerge a zoophyte at last—it lives and dies a jelly fish, or at least in the likeness of one; and, to complete the strange history, it gives birth to children unlike itself—children that resemble their grandfather, but not their father! It produces in due time ciliated eggs, dies probably soon after their liberation, and these eggs give rise to the zoophyte again. Such is the curious story of the reproduction of the bell-corallines.

Similar facts have been observed with respect to others of the lower animals, and we have had much clever theorising thereupon. These are mystic passages in the Book of Nature, which we do not readily interpret; and there is need of much patient observation of

facts, before we may hope to reach their full significance. Meanwhile, good reader, we might inflict upon thee some theoretical views of our own, were it not rather our purpose to tell thee a plain, unvarnished tale, and to avoid, as much as possible, the technicalities of science.

It is now a settled point that some, at least, of the hydroid zoophytes are phosphorescent. Mystic lights gleam from each little cell, when at night the frond which bears a colony of certain species is roughly agitated. The polype population, it would seem, illuminate their dwellings, not in seasons of joy and triumph, but of alarm. When irritated and annoyed, they literally flash fire at their assailant: their indignation is charming! It is worth while to provoke an anger which finds expression in so much of brilliancy and beauty.

Some of the commoner kinds on our own coasts are among the most phosphorescent. A delicate bell-coralline (*Laomedea*), which overspreads, with its miniature forests, the belt-like fronds of the larger sea-plants, may be mentioned as remarkable in this way. If a piece of weed covered with this zoophyte be shaken in sea-water at night, a star will glitter for a moment in almost every crystal cell.

Before concluding this paper, we must endeavour to describe a few of the more remarkable and beautiful of the forms of life included within the tribe of which we have been writing. And we will seek our first example in those bellied pools,

Left at low-water glistening in the sun;
where

Rocks in miniature,
With their small fry of fishes, crusted shells,
Rich mosses, tree-like sea-weed, sparkling pebbles,
Enchant the eye, and tempt the eager hand
To violate the fairy paradise.

You look down through the clear water, and after awhile your eye rests on a group of little *plumes*, from two to three inches in height, of the most delicate whiteness, and of such tenuity that you can with difficulty distinguish them. If but a ripple passes over the surface of the pool, they are lost. Each plume is a zoophyte of the hydroid kind (*Plumularia*). Where it is now rooted, a small leech-like creature once fixed itself, and from this as a germ, the graceful, feathery form was gradually evolved, its plumules all laden with fairy cells, from which as many fairy polypes, partners in the same vitality, display their arms, milk-white and prettily embossed. In the fish, which occasionally darts across the pool to the shelter of the hanging weed, we have an example of the greatest activity and locomotive power. A more complete contrast to it cannot be imagined than the being we have just described, which, fixed like the plant, leads a still and vegetative life amongst the *Algae*.

In the *Tubularia* we have a collection of slender horny tubes, attached to some foreign base, and all the tubes are crowned by polype-heads, crimson and white, rose-coloured or scarlet, like gorgeous flowers springing from straight and naked stems. A mass of this zoophyte bears no slight resemblance to a gay parterre. Down through the centre of each tube passes a thread of living flesh, to which the polype is attached. The flower-like heads which are unprotected by a cell, and cannot be retracted, are deciduous: they fall, and are renewed; and it would seem that crop after crop may sprout from the prolific pulp.

We have here, surely, a strange form of life—a tube well-nigh filled with a 'semi-fluid organic pulp,' rooted, and surmounted by an armed and richly-coloured head, which provides nutrition!

This genus is not uncommon in our seas, and few prettier sights reward the dredger than a mass of this fine zoophyte with its polypes in full health and splendour. The latter are generally inactive. The long,

slender, petal-like arms droop listlessly and elegantly around the vividly-painted body, and but seldom betray their real character as purveyors to the mouth.

We can only sketch one more member of this interesting tribe—the *Campanularia*, or bell-coraline, to which we have before alluded. We will select a common species, which any of our readers, who will, may obtain for himself by a little diligent search. A slender, corneous tube creeps over the stem of some other zoophyte or sea-weed, and from this rise at intervals long and pellucid stalks, ringed, and surmounted by bell-shaped cups of crystalline transparency, the rims of which are cut into the prettiest crenulations. Every here and there along the creeping fibre are set the vesicles, also ringed, within which the mysterious little jelly-fishers are matured through which the species is propagated. Within the cups are placed the polypes, which cast out their arms over the serrated rim. Delicacy, transparency, and grace, pervade the entire structure; the spirit of beauty has thrown itself into every curve and line; the eye rests with full satisfaction on the little cups, so perfect is their form, and so pure their transparency; and hardly less beautiful are the ringed and twisted pedicels that support them.

Profusely and widely is this minute being distributed over marine productions. On our own shore, you may count some hundreds of its crystal chalices on a single bunch of coraline. We have seen it investing tufts of the Gulf-weed that had tossed and drifted on distant seas; and could not but think how many millions of the little cups, with their happy polype inmates, must rise and perish yearly on that vast belt of floating vegetation, which marks the course of the mighty stream—rise and perish unseen. Quiet but impressive preachers, surely, are these little creatures from their crystal cells—witnessing unobtrusively, but with a certain strangely persuasive eloquence, to the providence of a gentle Power, who loves beauty for beauty's sake, and seeks no other reason for increasing indefinitely the amount of sentient being, than this—that there may be *more of happiness* in His universe.

THE CLAIRVOYANTE IMPOSTURE.

A FEW weeks ago, a considerable number of the inhabitants of Edinburgh—quite with their own consent—were made the victims of a clever and audacious deception, under the name of science; and painful as the subject must be to many worthy and credulous people, we would not here allude to it, but for the purpose of putting the country generally on its guard against similar delusions. A subordinate reason also influences us. Our own name has been unwarrantably used as that of one giving some degree of credence to the operations of the pretended man of science; and in bare justice to ourselves, we are compelled to place the matter in its true light.

The parties to this extraordinary deceit were, a person styling himself Mr Bernardo Eagle, and a rather prepossessing girl, his daughter, apparently seventeen or eighteen years of age. Mr Eagle, who travels with a brass band and the paraphernalia of a professional conjuror, took a large public room, and there held nightly exhibitions of what he described as Clairvoyance. Vast crowds attended to witness these demonstrations, which we shall attempt to describe.

On a stage in front of the spectators, the girl Miss Eagle was seated on a chair, and her father, with a variety of passes and gestures, threw her, as he alleged, into a state of coma. Her eyes seemingly closed, and she was stated to be mesmerically asleep, and in a condition of clairvoyance. What was the

exact nature of this mysterious condition, and how it was to bear on the performances, the father tried to explain; but so confused was his harangue, and so illiterate were his definitions, that nothing satisfactory could be made of the discourse. Divested of jargon, his story was this:—Some six or seven years ago, when giving exhibitions in conjuring in a provincial town in England, he saw for the first time experiments in mesmerism and clairvoyance, and he forthwith resolved to attempt something of the kind with his daughter. He did so, and was successful; gratified with the results, he had since partially abandoned conjuring, and addressed himself to exhibitions like the present. His daughter had travelled with him; and her education had been entirely neglected; she could read, but that was all. Doubts, he proceeded to say, would be entertained of the truth of clairvoyance; but this was of no avail. All great discoveries—as, for example, the theory of the circulation of the blood, and vaccination—had met with discredit at first; and it was not surprising that clairvoyance should encounter similar treatment. He would now shew that his daughter was in a state to answer satisfactorily any question that he might put to her. Between his mind and hers there had been established an intimate union. What he thought of, *she* thought of, notwithstanding the distance he would place between them.

Having pronounced an exordium of this nature, Mr Eagle went to work with his performances. Stepping down from the stage amidst the audience, he requested that any article might be put into his hand, for the purpose of testing the powers of the 'little clairvoyante.' There was of course a rush of articles from the ladies and gentlemen seated around; each eager to get some account of the object handed for inquiry. Watches were ordinary subjects of experiment. Opening a watch, Mr Eagle would ask his daughter the number and maker's name inscribed within it; and she was generally correct in the answers. A sealed packet would be handed to him, with the request that his daughter would state what was in it. In such cases, she was as frequently wrong as right; until the father opened the packet, and saw what were the contents. His questions were then answered correctly. It was evidently of importance that he should be fully acquainted with the nature of everything submitted for inquiry. If he was ignorant of what should be the true answer, 'the little clairvoyante' was in a perplexity, and her answer was a mere guess. As the means employed by Eagle to acquaint himself with the nature of the thing asked were generally successful—as he, indeed, saw with his eyes, and heard with his ears—it is not to be doubted that he elicited a surprising accuracy in the responses. At first, the thing was really astonishing. So promptly were the answers given to the most odd questions, respecting the numbers of watches, the names subscribed to letters, the engraving on seals, the nature of miniature likenesses, &c., that one felt at a loss to account for the phenomena on any ordinary principle. Great numbers of respectable individuals, after repeated visits, were convinced that the case was one of so-called clairvoyance—an undeniably manifestation of a newly-discovered truth in nature!

On the other hand, there were grave doubters. One thing was clearly suspicious. Eagle always asked the question himself; and in doing so, employed many more words than were at all necessary. Until the response was uttered, he kept talking: 'Come, now, miss, be quick; we are waiting; quick as possible; let me hear you answer: do you hear?' and so on; while the poor girl sat in her apparently dreaming state, trying to gather a cue from the language addressed to her. That the whole thing was a deception, we never had any doubt. In the first place, it is our belief that the girl saw through her eye-lashes, and, to a certain extent, observed the external character of objects.

This was one means of assisting her to respond. Next, we felt assured that the nature of the answer she was to deliver, was conveyed through a certain collocation of words, previously studied and agreed on between the performers. It was also unfortunate for Eagle, that he had confessedly been a conjuror; and we all know what marvellous feats are accomplished within the regions of legerdemain. Much of the proceedings likewise bore a suspiciously close resemblance to divination and fortune-telling. Disconsolate mothers received intelligence of sons in distant quarters of the globe; a deserted wife was relieved by hearing tidings of her husband; and a gentleman interested in the fate of the *Great Britain* steamer, was assured that she reached her destination in Australia on the 15th or 16th of November. It may be doubted whether this did not bring the father and daughter within the scope of the laws against fortune-telling, and obtaining money under false pretences.

The Edinburgh newspaper press were not unanimous in denouncing the performances as a trick. To the credit of the *Scotsman*, it boldly proclaimed that an imposture was being practised, and gave publicity to letters from correspondents, aiming at an explanation of the phenomena. It was shrewdly remarked by one writer, that the words addressed by the father to the daughter might bear a covert meaning, and be symbolic both of letters of the alphabet and of figures. There can be no doubt that such was the case. The trick is of French origin, and is completely explained in an article in the *New Monthly Magazine* for December 1852. Besides conveying meanings by words placed in a certain arrangement, Mr Eagle had the address to convey a peculiar meaning by sounds with his feet. On the two occasions on which we were present, a question was whispered by some individuals to the father relative to Napoleon; and each time when the father asked what he was thinking of, he loudly stamped with his foot on the floor. That stamp produced the same gestures from the girl on both occasions; she rose from her chair, and pretended to go through the ceremony of Napoleon signing his abdication. This was so palpable a fraud, that we did not hesitate to say so to those about us, and immediately left the room.

That the nature of the alleged clairvoyance might be tested in a manner which public exhibitions scarcely admitted of, Mr Eagle was invited by Mr John Gray, of the *North British Advertiser*, to give a private performance before a select party of gentlemen; but this invitation was declined on some frivolous grounds, and his exposure was left to be effected publicly, and in a manner which, it is to be hoped, will not be forgotten by the pretended mesmerist. We quote an account of the affair from the *Scotsman* of Wednesday, December 8:

"On Saturday last, an efficient scrutiny was made by some medical gentlemen who dropped in upon a day-exhibition which Mr Eagle had advertised. Even before any interference or inquisition took place, Miss Eagle, from some cause or other—probably from being flustered by knowledge of what was coming—was not so ready in her answers as on some former occasions—in fact, almost all the attempts missed fire. Professor Simpson asked Mr Eagle to explain his theory of clairvoyance. Mr Eagle replied, that clairvoyance merely implied a transference of the thoughts of the person *en rapport* to the thoughts of the clairvoyante. The professor then put a question to Mr Eagle to be answered by the clairvoyante, insisting at the same time that the question should be put in a particular form of words. An answer was not obtained. 'Well,' said the professor, 'is it of any consequence in what form you put the question?' 'Certainly,' said Mr Eagle; 'I must rouse her attention sufficiently.' 'But cannot one form of words accomplish that object as well as any other?' Extrication from this difficulty was impossible; and as a

relief or compromise, the professor told Mr Eagle to ask the price of a certain watch in any way he pleased, and offered to inform him of the price immediately after the question was put. In this also the conjuror failed, though the experiment was tried several times. The professor then took out a ten-pound note, and offered to tell Mr Eagle the number of the note, and afterwards to present it to him as a gift, if his daughter told the number correctly on being simply asked 'What is the number of this note?' No answer was returned; and on Mr Eagle saying that he did not clearly see the number of the note, another one was shewn him, and the question repeated, with an offer of *both* the notes if the question was answered. This was also unsuccessful, evidently shewing that there is a communication established between the father and daughter in the way in which the question is asked. After sitting for an hour and a half, the audience dispersed, after a motion had been made by Dr Moir, and unanimously carried, that the whole affair was an imposition, and after Professor Simpson had administered a rebuke."

Nothing more, we presume, need be said. The alleged clairvoyance is only a clever piece of conjuring, dependent on mnemonics or a nice exercise of memory. Declared to be such by Mr Eagle, the thing would deserve attention, and furnish no small share of harmless amusement; but put forward as a positive truth in nature, a flagrant injury to science is committed, and a deception practised meriting public reprobation and punishment.

W. C.

MY ARRIVAL IN FAIRYLAND.

UNLESS disenchanted by reality, the fervid fancies of youth never wholly lose their power. What we worshipped in the spring-time, we dream of lovingly in the autumn; and the unrealised vision of the young heart has all the magic of enchantment to the mature brain. It was so with me in my anticipations of a certain city of Fairyland. In the sadly unprofitable dreams of my first youth, this had borne a large share. Marble palaces, godlike men, beautiful eyes glancing through jalousied windows, fairy figures stealing among flowery balconies, gondoliers—every one of whom was Apollo's twin—dressed in a picturesque costume, always clean, and singing Tasso and Ariosto all day long—sunshine in a golden flood—moonlight in a silver glory—one atmosphere of love, and light, and beauty, crowning tower and palace, with an unfading aureola, made up the picture of the Adriatic Queen. This dream of her beauty had continued through the rough awakenings from many another fancy, which a hard struggle with the world had given me; and it was with all the flush and glow and bounding blood of olden days, that I set out on an Italian tour, which was to have as its culminating point of interest sunny, beautiful, beloved Venice!

We had stood awe-struck beneath the rushing waters of Schaffhausen, and had watched the blood-red sun leap up to life from the Rhigikulum; we had knelt on the Field of the Oath at Lucerne, and prayed in the Chapel of William Tell; we had counted the shadowy lizards, chased the blue-winged grasshoppers, gathered wild cyclamen, and laid ourselves to sleep in the vineyards of sweet Como; we had mused on the roof of Milan Cathedral, and spent hours in loving admiration of its pinnacles and statues—but all this was nothing to the glory which was to come; what we had seen hitherto formed but faint shadow of the miracles we were to see; and the deepest joy that we had felt was

but cold death to the magic ecstasy we were to feel when we trod our first step in the streets of Venice.

It was a dull day when we left Verona by railway. A thick mist, which hung in the air, soon changed into a driving rain, and this again subsided to a chilly, drizzling shower, more like the Highlands than Italy. Towards the evening, it became very cold; and we found our light clothing insufficient and uncomfortable. In Milan, it had been intensely hot—the thermometer standing at 90 degrees in the shade, and even the early morning sun intolerable. The whole day long we had lain gasping for air, shutting up the windows, and closing the jalousies, for the air blew in like the blast of a furnace, and the sunlight was not to be looked upon with impunity. From Treviglio to Brescia we had been suffocated with heat, and stifled with dust; from Brescia to Disenzano, on the Lago di Garda, we had almost resolved on suicide, in the hope that the purgatory of suicides was an ice-cellar; but at Verona we wiped the mud from our boots, and shook the rivulets from our umbrellas, and thought there were even worse things than sunshine and warm winds.

We passed through Padua, birthplace of St. Anthony, without a wish to see its Palace of Reason or its devils in the Palazzo Pappafava; *café au lait* and *ayufs à la coque* were more to our wishes just then. The most enthusiastic lover of art among us would have hesitated long before giving up a good supper and comfortable bed for a sight of all the masters in Italy. We were very tired, wolfishly hungry, and one of us at least savagely ill-tempered; for the constant presence of those heavy, hideous German heads, above the hated Austrian uniform, was not the best panacea for this particular traveller's good-humour. We had spent the whole of the forenoon in looking over Verona—'doing Verona,' as the phrase runs—and consequently we had lived on paints and stones alone, which we found a rather unsatisfactory diet when the excitement was over. It was late now—dark, dirty, and raining—when it was announced to us that we were passing over the grand bridge which connects the city with the mainland, and that we should soon be at our journey's end. In effect, the train stopped in a few minutes, and we all scrambled out into the wet and mud beneath the shining gas-lamps of the station.

Through a long, long dirty way we were marched in procession to the heart, the important spot, the vital function of the railway—the Passport Office. Our passports had been taken from us bodily in Verona, and restored just in time for our starting; they had been carefully examined at the gates, looked at once in the train, then taken away in the train; and now we were to have their equivalents or themselves, if the authorities thought us proper denizens of Venice—that is to say, if none of us wore a Garibaldi hat, or owned any book of liberal ideas. It was a large square room into which we were directed, where men behind railed desks sat busily writing; and where one older than them all sat by an open table scrutinising the passports, and dealing out small strips of paper to those whose original safe-conducts were otherwise disposed of. We were motioned within a thick bar stretched across the room, and there we stood clustered behind this Jove of the sphere of passports, each waiting for his turn. Unpronounceable German and Russian names were called out, so effectually disguised in their new Venetian dresses, that their very owners could not recognise them; smooth-faced Englishmen, with loud voices and angular motions, fought frantically for such a rendering of their crabbed cognomina as should entitle them to their own passports; Frenchmen grimaced and chattered, as their prim syllables were enlarged by wide Italian mouths and increased by full Italian accents; and melancholy Venetians stood haughty and silent, waiting for permission to enter their own city from these renegade servants of a foreign despot—these

degenerate sons of a race of heroes. At last our turn came; and, with many an ineffectual effort to persuade the old sinner to give our fathers' names something of their natural sound, we secured our safe-conducts and prepared to depart. But, unfortunately, one of our party was an officer of rank, an honour he found of no small inconvenience to him wherever he travelled; and, whether to shew him peculiar respect as the representative of the British army and pet cub of the British lion, or whether to place him under doubly strict surveillance, so as to prevent his undermining the city, blowing up the arsenal, corrupting the garrison, or doing anything else against the law of nations and beyond the power of man, which the Austrians in Italy seem daily to dread from the English, we did not know; all that was patent to us was, that his passport was sent off to the military office, while ours were ignominiously countersigned by the police only. We had therefore to wait another weary half-hour before we were released, when, with a dozen harsh consonants rendered into one liquid flow of vowels, our military friend was presented with his papers, and we all rushed off to the Bagaglio Office.

Then began a skirmish for life and death. Then boxes, round, square, and oblong—some black, some brown, some unpretending deal, some covered with paper, some bristling with hair—were handed over to the umps of the luggage inquisition: then broke out a war with stiff straps and rusty locks, with cords whose knots would not be coaxed loose, and with thongs that would not be persuaded out of their buckles: then were revealed the secret mysteries of each man's shirts and hose; and his stock of boots and brushes, tooth-powder and pomade, displayed for the advantage of all beholders: then searchers of inquiring minds made much of treasonable-looking waistcoats, and thought Mazzini had had a hand in boot-hooks and neck-ties: then unlettered porters clutched a Bradshaw or a Murray with frantic eagerness, and handed the same over to a 'head' for seizure or endorsement, as the head thought proper: then agonised ladies shrieked for mercy on their Paris bonnets, and indignantly settled their violated wardrobes, as they smoothed collars, and cuffs, and rumpled flounces: then yellow-leaved books of German hieroglyphics hopelessly bewildered the Venetian inquisitor, who was fain to consign the tough morsel to his Austrian partner, better able than himself to decide on the merits of Goethe or the improprieties of Schiller: then English oaths and French *sacré*s mingled with melodious Italian blasphemy and gruff Teutonic anger: and at last, fighting triumphantly through all these miseries, we emerged into the street, and stood on the borders of the Grand Canal at Venice. What a godlike moment! Tasso, Ariosto, Dante, divine Raphael, glorious Titian; the heroic deeds, the burning passions of the past—all swept before my brain like stormy clouds: I was bewildered, entranced, enslaved—I was in Venice, my adored Venice!

'Omnibus!' 'Gondola!' 'Gondola!' 'Omnibus!' rent the air, as crowds of half-seen figures, flitting up from the dark waters, surrounded us like dusky gnomes, and plied desperately for a fare.

'You had better go by the omnibus,' said 'our chief' to me. 'It is so wet, it will be better for you.'

I was struck with the anomaly of the word, and wondered much how an omnibus could run in Venice. However, being a meek animal when I am tired, I supposed our chief knew what he was talking about.

'Colonel —— is not ready yet,' he then said. 'Stand here till I go and see after him.'

I did as I was bid, and stood in the pouring rain, out on the pavement, and suffered a minor martyrdom from the crowd of surrounding persecutors. My thin boots were soon soaked, and my light dress clung dank and dripping round me. A kind-hearted individual, in a

capuchin-cloak, and with jet-black mustache, held an umbrella over me. I speculated on the probability of his being a Venetian noble, direct descendant of all the Doges, and thanked him very warmly. But when I found that he was the conductor of our omnibus, my gratitude cooled wonderfully.

‘Gondola, signora! gondola!’ shouted half-a-dozen voices in my ear.

‘No, no, omnibus!’ cried my friend with the umbrella, keeping me in a kind of barricade formed by his arms and cloak.

‘How polite these Italians are!’ thought I. ‘What Englishman would take so much trouble for a stranger?’ Our military and our chief now stumbled out of the Bagaglio Office.

‘Omnibus! Gondola!’

‘A private gondola!’ said our chief, with the air of a travelled man who won’t be imposed on. By this time he had learned that carriages and horses did not run in the canals of Venice. My protector immediately flung himself into the most frantic state. Had you threatened him with instant annihilation, he could not have vociferated more earnestly against the treachery and barbarity of the proposition. My eyes were opened—my prince was but a Venetian ‘cad’ after all!

‘I have promised the omnibus-man,’ said I to our chief in English: ‘you said the omnibus, you know.’ I did not let him see that I was aware of his blunder; I reserved it till I was spiteful, and could do it justice. The men themselves took up the quarrel, and we ran great chance of being carried off by halves, so fierce were those Venetian gestures, and so uncompromising those Venetian oaths. However, on my omnibus prince making a strong point of holding the umbrella over the signora, the private gondolier thought that he must persevere quit the field: he could not stand against such a heavy fire as this; so he yielded, grumbling, and we and our luggage were shot into the omnibus or public gondola.

The boat was full—full of dripping souls of all conditions and ages. Two heartless ruffians were smoking, an offence which would warrant an impromptu murder when shut up in a gondola at night, with ten damp bodies steaming like ten vapour-baths. A party of young men were talking bad French, and making very original love to a laughing little woman, who seemed to have good-humour and wit enough for the whole conclave; our English selves sat, as befitted our nation, stately, gloomy, and silent; a young Italian mother dandled a screaming mummy; and the conductor growled at the boatmen, and the boatmen swore among themselves.

Thus we glided up the Grand Canal of Venice, on this first evening of our arrival. The dim lamps along the water’s edge cast but a flickering light as we stole through long lines of stately palaces: we heard nothing but the cries of the gondoliers as they shot down the smaller water-streets, and gave notice of their coming; and this spectral light and spectral movement, mingled with the plashing of the oars, gave an unearthly character to the whole scene. It might have been a city of the dead, and we a boat laden with dim ghosts, for all the life and animation and warmth that connected us with the upper world.

‘Hôtel de la Ville!’ called the conductor, as we stopped at the steps of a marble palace, which had once belonged to a noble family.

Landlord and waiters came out with flaring lights; rooms were inquired for, found, and secured unseen; and then, by much exertion, our baggage was released from the prison of the omnibus, and brought into the hall. By the increased light, I saw our boatmen—our gondoliers—our Apollo’s twins—our beautiful, heroic singers of Tasso. Two squalid men, dressed in long greatcoats reaching to their heels—greasy, tattered, filthy, seeming to have lain for centuries in some second-

hand Irish slop-shop, the cast-offs of the peasantry—with high European hats of narrow brims, battered in at the crown, worn white and shiny at the edges—with countenances which bore the stamp of every villainy imprinted on features of indescribable ugliness—men who were one in rank and demoralisation with our lowest cabmen—completed the disenchantment of Venice; and as the omnibus rowed away, and left us standing in the cold, comfortless marble hall, through the roof of which the pitiless rain was pouring in torrents—and as we took possession of our cold comfortless rooms, which were neither clean nor sweet, I stood aghast at the contrast of the childish enthusiasm with which I had pictured our becoming guests of this queen of the waters, with the misery and despair and disgust that had taken possession of me now. Instead of all the sunshine, the love, the beauty, warmth, glow, and glory of my anticipations, to find only wet and dirt, and fleas and cold, and gondoliers that looked like Irish Jews!

It was too bad! I could have cried to think how I had wrecked myself on the rock of romance, and what a fool I had been for so many years! As I sat and ate my supper of garlic and oil—for I am sure we had nothing else under all those queer names of the *carte*—I afforded a fine fund of amusement to our chief and our military, both of whom seemed to think my sulky face the most delicious sport they had had for some time. So I relieved my mind by quarrelling heartily with them both, and marching out of the room with all the tragic dignity of four feet nothing, because it was a wet night, and I was disappointed.

But I am bound in conscience to state, that the next day the sun came out, and there sat Venice like a diadem queen, clothed in a robe of glory. The waters glittered in the light; the silent swift gondolas shot by like skimming birds; the marble palaces rose, one after the other, like magical creations, along the Grand Canal; the Place of St Mark, the ducal palaces, the churches, and the towers, were all the realisations of so many dreams of beauty. Beautiful eyes glanced, as the fancies of youth had seen them glance in the moonlight long ago; and the romance which the rain of last night had dissipated, now rose anew like a silver mist when the wind has passed, in the sunshine of the morning. Venice—beautiful, beloved Venice!—home of a race of demigods, city of deathless beauty, nurse of deathless fame, thou laidst thy shining hand across my eyes, and for the future they are blinded to everything but thee.

WORD ON THE WINE QUESTION.

It would be rash to say that port wine is the favourite drink of Englishmen which it once was, for certainly an immense portion of the refined classes of society are now reformed into the use of claret—when they can get it. Still, port has a certain traditional fame, and is one of the wines regularly placed on the table by a vast number of gentlemen of the middle, as well as higher classes. That ancient coalition, port and sherry, remains as a household word of England, and probably will do so for some time longer. Our wonder is, that port retains a single particle of our national affections. Independently of any imputed process of home fabrication, it is well known to undergo such a process in its native country. No one can tell what any given port is made of: it is not the production of any special vineyard; it is a mixture prepared in Oporto, and hence its name. Compounded in that great seat of wine-manufacture, it may be assumed to contain a certain proportion of the grapes grown on the Douro, with a great deal of elder-juice, apple-juice, sloe-juice, logwood, colouring matter, sweetening matter, brandy, and a variety of secret ingredients, which go to make up that article which the Portuguese government defends as suited to

the British taste, and, in fact, a thing which 'British subjects cannot possibly live without.' It cannot but be considered a curious circumstance, that one seldom sees the thing called port anywhere but in Great Britain, or in some of the colonies and states which she has founded. Russia, we understand, is almost the only exception to this general rule, there being occasional shipments of the article from London to St Petersburg—perhaps with a view to accommodate our countrymen abroad, and those Russian *noblesse* whose tastes have been vitiated by our example. In the main, therefore, port is an English curiosity, a something which foreigners coming to England from all parts of the world taste once, just to say they have tasted it, and then taste no more. A German who has been used to the cool simple wines of his country, the poorest of which have the smell of a vineyard in them, gets a glass of port, and finds it a dusky-hued liquor, darker than he has ever seen before, or than any grapes could make it. He puts it to his lips, and smells brandy; he drinks it off, and finds it mawkishly sweet and disagreeably rough; when he puts down his glass, he feels a heat in his throat, as if he had been taking cayenne pepper. His eyes water, because he is not used to it. If he is fortunate enough to have one at hand, he will take a glass of claret to counteract its effects. A French farce, shewing a Frenchman's mishaps in London, represents him getting a glass of port, and seeing its inky colour, calling for pen and paper to write a letter with it. A Portuguese himself would not recognise it as a wine; for while port has but one well-known flavour, the Alto Douro, in fact, produces a variety of wines similar to burgundy or claret, which are quite unknown here in their simple forms. At Oporto, as has been said, these are all mixed, good and bad, together, and then brandied, coloured, and adulterated to make that curious mixture which they very properly call port, and ship for England.

Why the English should be so singular in their fancy for port, is a question not sufficiently cleared up. Some persons allege that the taste is a result of climate. Our cold and humid atmosphere demands a stimulating liquor. There may be some truth in associating a love of alcoholic stimuli with a raw climate; but this cannot be the whole truth. Holland has a rawer climate than our own, yet we do not find that the Dutch are bibbers of port—the ordinary drink among them being the German or French wines. Besides, in Scotland, in the olden time, claret was universally drunk, and port was unknown. The truth is, that the extraordinary proneness in England to port is of modern date. It owes its origin to fiscal arrangements; and these having been established, as it were, by force of law, it has continued by sheer dint of fashion and prejudice. In this, as in many things, the evil had its rise in an insane desire to injure France. Previously to the year 1679, French wines were largely consumed in England, and those of Portugal were comparatively little known. In that year, the English government, from a feeling of animosity towards France, suddenly prohibited the importation of French wines, thus by an act of parliament depriving the whole nation of the liquor it had been accustomed to drink. This arbitrary act caused great dissatisfaction: attempts were made to smuggle large quantities of claret on the southern coast. At length, to put down this contraband trade, and stop the popular clamour, government were compelled to remove the prohibition. In 1693, however, French wines, from some cause, were again prohibited, and port forced into notice. It appears that the new wine was long regarded with distrust, although, in truth, the port of that period was comparatively genuine, and not dissimilar from some kinds of claret and burgundy. In 1702, a government, totally ignorant of the true principles of political economy, entered into a treaty with

the Portuguese government, binding the English nation, in exchange for some trifling commercial advantages, to take the wine of Portugal in preference to those of France.

This treaty, called the 'Methuen Treaty,' was considered at the time a master-stroke of policy, and an excellent blow at the French; but its effects proved most prejudicial to English taste and pockets. The originally wholesome port wine had already become the fiery adulteration which we know it, and the encouragement thus given to its consumption confirmed the taste of the port-drinker. The refined country gentleman, who hated 'thick stuff, and longed for a glass of gentle claret,' disappeared; and the heavy English squire of the last century, who ate heavy meals and drank heavy port, succeeded. We have met him even in these days, when more intellectual pleasures have counteracted, if they have not weakened, the love of port. We have dined with him many a time at the London Tavern, on all sorts of anniversaries. He has taunted us with asking the waiter expressly for claret; and while we were enjoying its delicious silky softness, its rich odour of raspberry and violet, he has sneered at us as 'a boy,' and prophesied that we should live to prefer his coarse, demoralising flavour of brandy and pepper. Although Mr McCulloch considers the Methuen Treaty injurious in its effects to both parties, it is evident that the Portuguese government soon discovered that they had made a good bargain by Lord Methuen's 'master-stroke of policy.' In 1756, the administration of the Marquis Pombal (no doubt for a good consideration) granted a charter to the present Oporto Wine Company—being a complete monopoly of the trade with England; so that, in effect, when the English taste for port was thoroughly established, and maintained by treaty, and it had become almost a necessary, they compelled us to purchase only of one company. A certain small extent of territory was marked out as the only district, on the banks of the Douro, in which wine should be produced for exportation. The entire and absolute disposal of this wine was placed in the hands of the company, who are further authorised to fix the prices to be paid by themselves to the cultivators, to prepare it for exportation, and to fix the price at which they should be sold to foreigners. A company with such power could not, of course, be anything but an intolerable nuisance. Secured against the competition of their countrymen, and enjoying, down to the year 1831, an almost absolute monopoly of the English market, they filled their pockets at our expense. At the very moment when the company have been shipping wine for England at £.40 a pipe, they have frequently been sending wine of the same quality to other countries at £.20. The price of wine has been trebled or quadrupled under this corporation. These abuses had been long complained of, though it was not until 1831 that the import duties on French and Portuguese wines were equalised. But, unfortunately, the habit of drinking port was too firmly fixed to be removed by merely equalising the duties on French wines, and the consumption of the latter has, therefore, not greatly increased; while most of the abuses of the port-trade previously complained of remain. The law of Portugal requires that port (let us abstain from calling it wine) should possess certain qualities, which an intelligent English grower of great experience in the district, declares 'cannot possibly be derived from the grape.' A notion prevails among the Portuguese, that we are a heavy meat-eating people, who require something more like spirit than wine to assist digestion; we are, moreover, considered a wealthy people, who have a decided prejudice against anything cheap. The same gentleman, examined in committee upon oath, stated, that to his repeated representations to the Portuguese authorities, having for their object to remove these abuses, he has received the answer, 'that British subjects do not like

a cheap article; and that it is considered that, whether the duties be lowered or not, the British consumer would always continue to pay a high price for his port.' Truly, with our absurd revenge on the French recoiling on our own heads, our Methuen treaties, and our long endurance of these abuses, we cannot complain of such opinions. Such is the history of what is called port, and of its preparation for the English consumer, not to speak of the home adulterations of boiled Brazil-wood, catechu, oak-bark, privet, beet, turnsole, and red sanders, which are not within the scope of the present paper.

Notwithstanding the avowed manufacture of port, it is said that no wine is more adulterated than sherry. The large consumption of this wine dates only from the time when the Prince-regent first made it fashionable. Spanish wines were drunk in the time of Shakespeare, as is evident from Falstaff's frequent call for a cup of sack. This was undoubtedly a Spanish wine, and is supposed to have been identical with sherry. The word *sack* is a corruption of *sec*; Spanish wines being still known in France as *vins secs*, or dry wines. After its revival a few years since, the demand increased so rapidly, that the growers, to meet it, were compelled to mix with it other wines, and otherwise to adulterate it, to suit the artificial English taste for fiery wines. Hence it happens that no natural sherry comes to this country; for it is the invariable result of these adulterations to corrupt the taste of the consumer, and thus to render him indifferent to the true flavour of the real produce of the grape. It is stated that the natural produce of Xeres, in the present state of the English taste, would not suit our markets; it would be considered inferior wine. On the other hand, those who have been accustomed to a pure wine, cannot drink the false sherries that are sent to England.

It would appear, therefore, very desirable, that the national taste for genuine wine should be improved by any possible means. We do not say that adulterations may not be practised by other countries as well as Spain and Portugal; but it does appear, that, in the wine-trade of those countries, grievous monopolies and artificial restrictions have tended to increase the price of wines, while accidental circumstances have encouraged an adulteration which has at length altogether corrupted the English taste, and rendered the genuine produce of the grape a thing almost entirely unknown in this country. This being the case, the admission of the cheaper wines of France and Germany at a low rate of duty, must obviously exercise a beneficial effect. We desire to speak seriously on this subject. Is it not a lamentable thing, that the appetite for strong, alcoholic, and absolutely vicious compounds, under the names of port and sherry, should be a result of acts of parliament? But the mischiefs of intemperance, so provoked, are only one department of the evil. The practical exclusion of French wines of a simple kind, inflicts an injury on France without benefiting ourselves; whereas the admission of these wines on a liberal footing, would do more to cement friendship and perpetuate peace between the two countries, than all the contrivances and blandishments of diplomacy. Both, therefore, as promotive of temperate habits, and as tending to maintain a lasting and genuine peace, we advocate the lowering of duties on French wines. Too long, in our opinion, have we sacrificed French friendships for a petty leaning to Portugal—a country which we have no reason to care much or anything about, and which at this moment, by a repudiation of its debts, is not allowed to be named on our stock exchange.

Let it not be supposed that the taste for the lighter wines of France and Germany is dead beyond revival in England. It is possible that their consumption would not be greatly increased at first; but genuine wine, however common, being sold at a cheap rate, could not fail gradually to work its way, and to lay

the foundation of a taste for simple, un intoxicate wines, in preference to the fiery compounds to which we have been accustomed, or to the still worse attractions of the gin-shop.

NOTES ON NAMES.

A CURIOUS little book, of the time of James I., entitled *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities, concerning the most noble and renowned English Nation*, has lately come into our hands, which—in dilating on 'the great antiquity of our ancient English tongue, and of the propriety, worthiness, and amplitude thereof'—professes to give the literal origin of many of those surnames and Christian names most in use amongst us. Several of these Saxon etymologies, we are aware, have been in modern times traced up to their root, and will occur to the reader's recollection; but others not so well known, it may perhaps afford us a half-hour's amusement to glance over. In doing so, we cannot refrain from prefacing them with the compiler's quaint commentary. He says: 'Thou mayst be well assured, courteous reader, that howsoever our ancient proper names may be by vulgar corruption varied from the original, yet not one but what was used by our ancestors with good signification and reason. They would not be unheedful or uncurious as to be content, like parrots, to speak they knew not what; but they did know what in their denominations they uttered, as disposing them to the embracing of some kind of precept or virtue. Herein the excellent custom of our ancestors was not inferior unto that of the ancient Hebrews, who observed the like—as in the names of Abram, &c. The foregoing may serve to shew not only the utility and worthiness of this most ancient custome, but how it is confirmed in the observation thereof even by God himself, and was without all doubt put by God into the minds of our ancestors, and such other of the ancient nations of the world as have observed the like.'

In primitive times, it became usual that men who had, in the first instance, given their names to places, should afterwards take their name from places. And by degrees this custom of taking surnames from some local circumstance, became more frequent than the former prevalent habit of a man forming his own proper name by adding 'son' to the patronymic of his father. Wood, Green, Field, Bourne, Hill, &c., are long recognised cases in point.

Comb meant with our ancestors a field of somewhat high or hilly ground—not *low*, like a meadow. It formed the termination of many surnames—modernised to *come*. Thus we have Ashcomb, Newcomb, &c. Dean or den signified the same thing as *dale*—namely, a 'hollow place in the earth'; hence Camden, &c., which originally meant 'valley of the camp.'

Legh, ley, or lea, our author considers to have been originally all one—either word being expressive of 'ground that was wholly overgrown'; and he cites three instances—Bramley, Bromley, and Barkley; that is, land naturally covered with brambles, broom, or birch.

Wick, also written *wich*, signifies a place of refuge—a retreat; and it remains yet the termination of some places in Germany—Schleswick, Brunswick, &c. In England, we have Warwick, Alnwick, Berwick; and the *k* having been in course of time corrupted to *h*, we find Dulwich, Greenwich, Sandwich, Norwich, &c.

The original meaning of *ey*—anciently written *ea*—may be noticed as a not uncommon termination to some of our surnames—for example, Sidney, Tilney, &c.—is *water*; in corroboration of which the writer observes: 'The French, retaining the old Teutonic word, doe give unto water the name of *eau*;' and it may therefore be assumed, that the early adopters of this termination had their possessions situated near

the water. Moreover, hence is derived our term of *island*, originally written 'eyland.'

Stock denotes the stock or trunk of some tree whence the residence is named. Stock is also in the Teutonic understood for a staff; and it is said to be the proper and ancient surname 'of the great and emperiall House of Austria, in memory whereof it beareth for its arms two ragged staves crossed salter-wise.'

Of the affix *thorp*, which forms a not unfrequent termination to some of our proper names, he remarks: 'Before we were acquainted with the French word *village*, or village, now in common use, "thorp" in our own ancient language was used to serve the turn; for example, Colthorp, so called from the coals made there'—modernised into Calthorpe.

The derivation of steward may not be generally known. As in our ancient language, 'stow' is the word for place, so is also *stede*; and *stede-ward*, which for euphony's sake has been gradually corrupted to steward, is as much as to say 'the keeper of a place.' May we not find this construction borne out in the analogous use of the term 'stede' or 'stadt'-holder (doubtless of Teutonic origin) and 'lieu-tenant' in French?—both signifying place-keeper.

In connection with the common termination of worth, our quaint compiler remarks, 'it signifies not worth as we now use it for value, but anciently it was "wearth" or "weard"—which termination is still frequent in Germany—and the meaning of "wearth" is a "place situated between two rivers"; or again, an isle or peninsula not in the sea, but in fresh water. Herefrom our name of "weares" in rivers is also derived.'

The surname Forester is evidently derived from the office of him who had the charge of the forest or chase under some nobleman. But there is also the name Foster, concerning which we would remark, that its primary origin, or full-length nomenclature, was foster-father, or rightly *foodster*-father, seeing it 'came of a man providing food for children that were placed under his and his wife's charge.'

Some have their surnames from their occupations—as Taylor, Turner, &c.; others from the colour of their hair or complexion—such are Browne, Hoare, Reddish, &c. And again, the names of animals, to which, as amongst the North American Indians, it was supposed the character of the owner bore some affinity, were at a primitive period transported into the class of surnames—Lyon, Hare, Lamb, Fox, and divers others, will immediately suggest themselves; and the ornithological and piscatory regions have also furnished their contribution; for example, Salmon, Heron, Roach, Drake, Woodcock, &c.

'It hath of late yeeres,' observes our author, 'grown somewhat usual in England, to give unto children for their proper names the surnames of their godfathers—a custom neither commendable nor in anywise well fitting, but in its result oftentimes very absurd and ridiculous, of which I could give some notable examples of the present day, but I omit them, as not being willing to offend by noting any persons in particular.'

The ancient and illustrious name of Howard comes from *Hold-ward*, which signifies 'the governor of a fort or hold.' In course of time, the *l* and *d* were omitted in the pronunciation, as in sundry other words we see the superfluous consonants thrown out.

Lambert was originally Lamb-heart, and denoted the 'heart of a lamb,' it being not uncommon in primitive times for parents to bestow such sort of descriptive appellations on their offspring; besides, that in later life it frequently attached as a cognomen to a man of any particular character or history.

Harman should rightly be Hart-man—a 'man of heart or courage,' and it is additionally conjectured, that the name Mainard (Maynard) comes from 'Manhart.'

There seems no doubt that Norton, Weston, and Sutton, common surnames amongst us, are severally a corruption from North-town, West-town, and South-town (denoting the original situation of their residences), in like manner as we read of Essex, Wessex, Sussex, amongst the East-Anglian kingdoms. 'Ton,' formerly 'tun,' is remarked to be the most common termination in use amongst us, and the following doggerel is quoted:—

In *ford*, in *ham*, in *ley*, and *tun*,
The most of English surnames run.

Ham means 'home.' It formerly signified a 'cover-ture or place of shelter,' and was thence restricted to one's private dwelling. Denham denotes a man's home being in a valley; Higham, that his residence was upon high ground; and the signification of the prefixes may be easily traced further. Holme, as in Chisholm, &c., is doubtless of the same family.

But we must restrain our instances, or they would exceed the bounds of this article. Of Christian names, we have not yet spoken; their variety and extent of significance, as set forth by our author, is almost illimitable. However, the instances we have brought forward—as regards localities and family appellations—will, perhaps, by affording a clue to the manner in which an ordinary word may be traced up to its root, be productive of interest to our etymology-loving readers, by leading them to pick out probable derivatives for themselves. It forms an amusing subject of speculation, for the materials of which they never can be at a loss while they bear in mind the names of our old English towns and localities. The names of all the counties admit of being disposed of in this way; for example, Berkshire, expressly specified as being so named from the number of trees (bark) originally growing over it; Hunting-downshire, &c.

The compiler of these antiquarian *radical* researches expresses himself in terms of almost ludicrous indignation as to the manner in which our language is patched up from the tongues of other countries. 'Of late,' he says, 'we have faine to such borrowing of words fr. Latin, French, and other languages, that it hath bin beyond all stay and control, which albeit some of us, who affect novelty, do like well, and deem our tongue thereby improved; yet strangers do carry away the far worse opinion thereof, saying that it is of itselfe no language at all, but the scum of many languages; and that, moreover, we have been faine to borrow so many words to eke it out, that if it were put upon us to repay our borrowed speech back again to the languages that may lay claim to it, we should be left little better than dumbe—unable, at least, to speak anything that should be sensible. For my part, I hold them deceived that think our speech bettered by this surpassing abundance of daily borrowed words, which, not originally belonging unto us, never can bear their true and rightful meaning. As well might we fetch words from the Ethiopians, and thrust them into our language, and baptize them by the name of English, as those we daily take from the Latin, or languages thereon depending. Hence it cometh, and hath been actually seen, that English-men conversing or communicating together [and introducing these newly-adopted words], do not always understand what each other mean. In proof whereof, I will cite you a curious story of what happened not long since. It fell out some yeeres ago, that a courtier, writing from London to a personage of authority in the north touching the trayning of men, and providing furniture for war, willed him, among other things, to *equippe* his horses. The receiver of the letter, with some labour, came at last to the understanding of it all, except *equippe*, whereof in no sort could he conceive the meaning. He then consulted with divers gentlemen in the neighbourhood, but none could resolve him; and in the end, none

of them being able to find out, in all the English they had, what the word *equips* might mean, they were fain to send a messenger on purpose to London, to ascertain the signification thereof from the writer of the letter.'

With this supplementary anecdote of 'England in the olden time,' we will conclude; only staying for a moment to remark, that the volume appears at one time to have belonged to Richard Cromwell, whose autograph it bears on its first page.

SMOKING IN PRUSSIA.

If there be one part of the continent more than another where the tourist blesses the introduction of railways, it is assuredly the interminable sandy plain in the midst of which it pleased the insane fancy of the great Frederick to establish his Prussian metropolis. But, like everything mundane, railway-travelling in Germany has its disadvantages; for, to those who, like myself, are abominators of smoking, a journey in a German *Gesellschaft* railway-carriage is positive misery. It must be that Germans endeavour to stifle their political cares and sorrows in the fumes of tobacco-smoke, for, assuredly, if all were well with them, they would not smoke so incessantly. The practice has become well-nigh universal; and I fully expect to find the women smoking when I next visit Germany. Now, they stoutly maintain that a man is not a man unless he smokes; and a lover would have but a poor chance of success if his sighs were not perfumed by tobacco-smoke. The modern German smokes from morning till night, ay, and sometimes through the night-hours too, as I know to my cost; for on one occasion lately, when my bed was placed against a door which communicated with the adjoining room in the hotel at which I was staying in Berlin, a stream of smoke came through the keyhole almost uninterruptedly during the night. No place is safe from the pollution. In the bedrooms, you will find pieces of sandpaper attached to the walls, with notices requesting smokers to rub their matches on the sandpaper, and not on the walls, which request, however, is little heeded; and in the railway-carriages you will see, and be considerably inconvenienced by, tin boxes fastened to the sides, bearing the words, *Zu Abfall von Cigarren*.—*Literary Gazette*.

CAN INSECTS TALK?

A striking instance of the possession of a capability of spreading intelligence, and that of a somewhat abstruse character, is furnished by experiments that have been made by Huber and others upon bees. Every one is aware that the queen-bee is an object of the greatest solicitude and attention to all the workers of the hive, and yet, among so many thousands, all busily employed in different and distant parts of the colony, it would appear impossible for them to ascertain, at least before the lapse of a considerable time, whether she was absent from among them or not. In order to see whether bees had any power of conveying news of this kind, the queen-bee has been stealthily and quietly abstracted from the hive; but here, as elsewhere, ill news was found to fly apace. For some half-hour or so, the loss seemed not to have been ascertained, but the progressively increasing buzz of agitation gradually announced the growing alarm, until shortly the whole hive was in an uproar, and all its busy occupants were seen pouring forth, their legions in search of their lost monarch, or eager to avenge with their stings the insult offered to their sovereign. On restoring the captured queen to her subjects, with equal secrecy, the tumult speedily subsided, and the ordinary business of the community was resumed, as before the occurrence. That in such cases as those above narrated, information, and that of rather a complex character, was transmitted by one insect to another, cannot be doubted—but by what means? All that has been ascertained upon this point is, that the ants and the bees cross their antennae in a peculiar manner with the antennae of the others that they encounter, and this action being repeated again and again, seems to be a mode of communicating intelligence common amongst the insect races.—*Rymer Jones's Natural History of Animals*.

CONSTANCY IN INCONSTANCY:

A YOUNG MAN'S CONFESSION.

Sing hath a large still heart, this lady of mine—
(Not mine, I' faith! though fools might deem she were):
She walks the world like some old Grecian nymph,
Pure with a marble pureness; moving on
Through the foul herd of men, environed
With native airs of deep Olympian calm.
I have a great love for this lady of mine :
I like to watch her motions, trick of face,
And turn of thought, when she speaks high and wise,
The tongue of gods, not men. Ay, every day,
And twenty times, I start to catch
Some tone, geste, look, of sweet familiar mould ;
And then my panting soul leans forth to her,
Like some sick traveller who, astounded, sees
Slow-moving o'er the distant twilight fields—
The lovely, lost, beloved memory-fields!—
Pale, ghostly people of an earlier world.

I have a friend—how dearly liked, heart-warm,
Did I confess, sure she and all would smile!
I mark her as she steals in some dull room
That brightens at her presence, slow lets fall
A word or two of wise simplicity,
Then goes, and at her going all seems dark.
Little she knows this! little thinks each face
Lightens, each heart grows purer 'neath her eyes ;
Good, honest eyes—clear, upward, righteous eyes,
That look as though they saw the unseen heavens,
And drew from thence their pity and their calm.
Why do I precious hold this friend of mine?
Why, in our talks—our quiet, fireside talks,
When we, like earnest travellers through the dark,
Grasp at the threads that guide to the other world—
Seems it a spirit not her own looks out
From these her eyes? until I pause, and quake,
And my heart groans as when some innocent hand
Touches the barb hid in a long-healed wound.
Yet still no blame, but thanks to thee, dear friend ;
Ay, even when we homeward walk at eve,
Thy careless hand loose linked beneath my arm—
The same height as I gaze down—nay, the hair
Of a like colour, fluttering 'neath the stars—
The same large stars which lit that earlier world!

I have another love—a gentle love,
Whose dewy looks are fresh with life's young dawn ;
God keep it to its setting! I foretell
That streak of light now quivering on the hills,
And edging the dusk vale where mute I watch,
Will broaden out into a glorious day.
Thou sweet one, standing where life's cross-tides meet,
And dipping into both thy timid hand,
Wise as a woman, harmless as a child,—
I love thee well!—And yet not thee—not thee,
God knoweth. They know, who sit among the stars.—
One, whose sun was darkened before noon,
Creeps slow and silent through the twilight land,
Snatches at glowworm rays and tapers pale
Of an hour's burning, lifts them to his breast,
Saying: 'Thank God! yet never call them day—
So love I these, and more. Yet thou, my Sun,
That leaped unto thy zenith, sat there throned,
And the whole earth was day—Oh, look thou down
From thy veiled seat, and know how dark I kneel !
How all these lesser lights but come and go
Poor mocking types of thee! Be it so. I keep
My soul's face to the eastward, where thou stand'st—
I know thou stand'st—behind the purpling hills ;
And I shall wake and find morn in the world.

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